

**STATE OF COLORADO
COUNTY OF ROUTT**

**ROUTT COUNTY COMMUNICATIONS ADVISORY BOARD
October 27, 2005**

Chairman Bob Struble, Steamboat Springs Fire and Rescue; called the meeting to order. Faith Mendoza, Routt County Communications Director; Chuck Wisecup, Oak Creek Fire Protection District, Chuck Vale and Cheryl Dalton, Emergency Management; Bob Reilley, North Routt Fire Protection District; John Warner and Dan Taylor, Sheriff's Office; Jody Lanahan and Ed Corriveau, Hayden Police; County Commissioner Doug Monger; Terry Barber, Information Systems; Pat Arnone, Pearson Communications; and Bryan Rickman, West Routt Fire Protection District, were present. Dee Bolton recorded the meeting and prepared the minutes.

EN RE: REVIEW OF MINUTES

Due to the lack of a quorum, no minutes were reviewed for approval.

**EN RE: CHANGE THE COUNTY COMMISSIONER EX OFFICIO
MEMBER OF THE COMMUNICATIONS ADVISORY BOARD**

Ms. Mendoza said that Commissioner Stahoviak, the County Commissioner representative on the Communications Advisory Board, had a conflict with the Communications Advisory Board meeting time and another meeting. The County Commissioners had asked that the Communications Advisory Board accept a change in the name of the County's ex officio representative for the remainder of 2005.

Mr. Rickman said that all of the commissioners could be listed as ex officio members, which would allow any of the three to attend the Communications Advisory Board's meetings.

The Communications Advisory Board, by consensus, agreed to change the County Commissioners' representative to Commissioner Doug Monger for the remainder of 2005.

EN RE: COMMUNICATIONS REPORT / FAITH MENDOZA

Ms. Mendoza said that the radio system was working well. Some reports had indicated that receiving transmissions from King Mountain had been problematic. Work on Farwell Mountain was ongoing but delayed at present until new batteries arrived. The Division of Wildlife had been to the Farwell Tower recently and reported that a part in the tower had possibly been struck by lightning.

Work on the Search and Rescue frequency continued. She had asked Mr. Arnone to attend this day's meeting to speak regarding options for connecting two

separate radio channels together. She noted that Mr. Arnone had recommended that travel ACU be used.

Mr. Warner thought that Search and Rescue planned to put its repeater on the Mount Werner site. He said that purchases with grant funds should be made as soon as possible since funding might be discontinued.

Mr. Arnone said that he recommended a five-card ACU system rather than a ten- or twelve-card system. One would be a Communications card; the other four would be radio cards that could be combined with each other to function as a seamless, versatile, portable repeater. An advantage would be that such an option would cost less than to invest in the Mount Werner site. Also, it was redundant to add another repeater at one site, especially when a single site had a range beyond which it would be ineffective unless every site had a Search and Rescue repeater. The system would cost approximately \$10,600, but it was currently on sale for \$8,999 until the end of 2005. He had already made the same suggestions to Search and Rescue.

Mr. Arnone exited the meeting at this time.

Ms. Mendoza reported that three people had recently left the Communications Center. She had researched the history of employment and determined that 75 people had worked in the Communications Center in the last ten years, and the average time stayed was 1.5 years: historically, 31 had left during or at the completion of training; D2s had averaged 2 years of service; D3s, five to eight years; supervisors, 8.5 years, and directors, one year. Currently, D2s were averaging 4 years; D3s, 3.6 years; and the director, 2.49 years. Since 1996, an average of 7.5 employees per year had been lost. She noted that the Communications Center's statistics were close to the national averages. She stated that four dispatchers had been hired on August 8, 2005, and training took a minimum of six months. She reviewed a sampling of the variety of reasons that people had given for leaving during exit interviews.

Mr. Struble asked that the trainees be reminded that providing good directions was a critical part of the dispatchers' job since good directions were critical to response time. He suggested that trainers not be required to handle calls to avoid additional stress. Mr. Taylor said that, due to the nature of the job and length of time that people stayed, trainers often had little experience.

Ms. Mendoza reviewed a handout for the calls received during the first three quarters of 2005. She noted that approximately 5,000 calls were received per month; 37,619 calls had been received to date, and approximately a total of 45,611 calls were received in 2004. Mr. Wisecup said that due to continued growth, the situation would not improve.

EN RE: ROUTT COUNTY RADIO SYSTEM AND 800 MHZ / FAITH MENDOZA

Ms. Mendoza said that she and Mr. Vale had attended a Fire Protection Oversight Committee meeting recently and discussed the future of the 800 MHz system and the process to accomplish goals. She said that Routt County's WIN grant was approved for \$870,645 for equipment purchases for King Mountain, Hayden, and Farwell, all of which would get a building and a generator, and King Mountain and Hayden would get a five-channel 800 system and a microwave hop. She noted that the regular 800 system worked like a cell telephone. North Routt would be an ICALL site due to the solar arrangement at that site. The County will fund the purchase of four command and control radios for the Sheriff's Office; West Routt Fire will ask the Hayden Town Board to purchase one command and control radio. Mr. Struble reported that three or four radios were budgeted but funding was cut from the budget for the purchase so Steamboat Springs would not purchase radios until 2007.

Mr. Vale said that two other grant applications were denied. He reviewed current coverage and lack of coverage around the County. He stated that Routt County's communications infrastructure had improved, but a decision had not yet been made to transition to the 800 MHz system. He felt that the State should build the basic system, then the County could test, make a decision, and then plan. He noted that the State's goal was 90% mobile coverage on the State's highways, only one of which was in Routt County; interoperability was the essential and ultimate goal.

EN RE: RADIO PROCEDURES / FAITH MENDOZA

Ms. Mendoza said that the 800 MHz system used mac channels that were assigned to regions. Routt County and nine other counties comprised one region. Radio procedures would have to follow a certain identifying protocol, some of which had yet to be finalized.

EN RE: UPDATING THE DISPATCH CENTER FOR WIRELESS 911 CALLS / FAITH MENDOZA

Ms. Mendoza said that all Nextel and Verizons cell phone calls could come into the Communications Center. Sprint and was next; Singulair had merged with Verizons.

EN RE: SALE/DISPOSAL OF RADIO EQUIPMENT

Ms. Mendoza reported that all of the surplus radios, chargers, and other equipment had been distributed. Additional radios were available for the asking.

EN RE: CRITICAL INCIDENT DISPATCHING / FAITH MENDOZA

Ms. Mendoza said that she was unable to locate the information that explained the way to request a dispatcher at a scene. Until a system had been devised, to request a dispatcher on-scene, contact a Communications Supervisor.

Mr. Wisecup asked how much debriefing was provided to on-scene dispatchers. Ms. Mendoza said that coordinating the debriefing was difficult. Mr. Rickman said that debriefing should occur within 48 hours of an incident to be effective. Mr. Struble said that making dispatcher debriefing mandatory should be considered.

EN RE: MAPPING IN THE DISPATCH CENTER

Ms. Mendoza said that addressing and mapping had been discussed at length. She said that agencies could go to the Dispatch Center and correct the maps. Also, with a new mapping system, she needed to know what information agencies wanted. Mr. Struble answered: accurate information in an instant, timely and correct directions, and locating information that would connect responders to specific locations within subdivisions.

Mr. Barber said that the County, the City, Road and Bridge signage, and residents had to provide the system with accurate information. The County Manager had recently made correct addressing a priority so the Information Systems Department will be tackling that project within the near future, but public education will be an important part of the process.

Mr. Vale asked to whom to take correct information. Ms. Mendoza said that the Dispatch Center should be advised. Mr. Barber said that a process needed to be developed. In the meantime, corrections should be provided to Ms. Mendoza, to Mr. Barber, or to Mr. Vale. The issue was whose information was legally correct.

Mr. Struble noted that each district was required to have boundaries, but some of the district boundaries were incorrect. Mr. Wisecup added that the district boundaries needed to be corrected so that dispatchers could contact the closest district responders, particularly for areas of the County that were not within a district.

EN RE: TASK FORCE MEETINGS

This agenda item will be discussed at the next Communications Advisory Board meeting.

EN RE: NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Corriveau said that his agency had been having recurring status check problems with Dispatch. Mr. Struble suggested that a meeting with Ms. Mendoza take place to resolve the issue.

EN RE: NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Communications Advisory Board will be held on January 26, 2006, from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m. in the Commissioners' Hearing Room. Agenda items should be submitted to Sue Heineman.

No further business coming before the Board, same adjourned sine die.

Dee Bolton, Recorder

Bob Struble, Chairman